

Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2010

Statement on the Death of John R. Wooden

June 5, 2010

I'm saddened to hear of the passing of an incredible coach and an even better man, John Wooden. As a basketball fan, I remember fondly his 10 NCAA championships, his unrivaled winning streak at UCLA, and the caliber of players he mentored. But as an American, I salute the way he achieved all that success, with modesty and humility and by wholeheartedly dedicating his life to the betterment of others. Even after he became one of the game's early heroes, he worked as a high school teacher. And for the rest of his life, on and off the court, he never stopped teaching. He never stopped preparing his players and everyone he met to be their best. Despite all the records and the championships, he once said that it wasn't the tournaments or the games he missed the most, it was the practice and the preparation.

He is reunited with his beloved wife Nell now, and my thoughts and prayers are with his children, James and Nancy, his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and all whose lives were forever changed because John Wooden lived his so well.

Categories: Statements by the President : Deaths :: Wooden, John R.

Names: Muehlhausen, Nancy; Wooden, James; Wooden, John R.

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